

In Memoriam

LEANDER WILLIAM PILCHER



111
7432

Library
School
of
Theology



A MEMORIAL
OF
LEANDER WILLIAM PILCHER
PRESIDENT OF PEKING UNIVERSITY
AND MISSIONARY OF THE METH-
ODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
TO CHINA

LOVINGLY INSCRIBED BY HIS BROTHER
LEWIS S. PILCHER



PRIVATELY PRINTED
1895

**Boston University
School of Theology Library**

LEANDER WILLIAM PILCHER.

1848-1893.

ON Friday evening, about 7 o'clock, November 24, 1893, died at the Mission Residence in Peking, China, the Rev. Leander William Pilcher, D.D., President of the Peking University and missionary of the Methodist Episcopal Church. During a period of ten weeks, he had been acutely ill from the effects of multiple abscesses of the liver, the sequel of a chronic ulcerative disease of the intestines, which the exposures and diet attending more than twenty years' labor in North China had occasioned. Against this disability he had struggled for some years: the urgent demands of the developing work in Peking had, however, kept him there long beyond the time when he should have taken advantage of a return to the United States for his health, and he was still planning to continue his work on the field for another year yet before leaving it, when the final catastrophe of his disease occurred. A day or two previous to his death, Dr. Pilcher was told that all his colleagues were anxious about his condition and praying for his recovery, if it were

the Lord's will, when he replied, "I am in the hands of a good Providence, and He cares." All through his continued illness his patience and faith were remarkable.

Upon the day of his burial private services in English were held at his residence, when his old associates, Rev. George R. Davis read appropriate selections of Scripture, and Rev. H. H. Lowry, D.D., made a most touching sympathetic prayer. Public funeral services then followed in Asbury Church, at which the venerable Dr. Blodget and Dr. Goodrich, of the American Board of Missions (Congregationalist), made eulogistic addresses. The audience was composed both of Chinese and of Europeans and Americans, missionaries and members of the Diplomatic and Imperial Chinese Customs Service. Three promising young men, who had been trained from boyhood by Dr. Pilcher, and were now Christian preachers, also took part in these Chinese public services, and their very presence preached a most eloquent sermon upon the successful missionary efforts of their former instructor.

The coffin was covered with white chrysanthemums in the shape of wreaths and crosses, while the Chinese character for "Peace" was made in green leaves upon a white pillow of chrysanthemums. Some of the students of Peking University, out of their love for their late instructor, had walked ten miles and back in order to



Interior of Asbury Chapel, with casket containing remains of Dr. L. W. Pilcher, on the morning of the funeral.

(From a photograph taken by Marcus Taft.)

purchase these flowers. The two floral Chinese characters meaning "Peace" and "Love" were placed, at the express wish of his former students, upon the funeral casket just above the heart of their beloved, departed instructor. An unusually large number of people, both Chinese and foreigners, accompanied the funeral procession to the Foreign Cemetery outside the West Wall of the city of Peking. Most kind letters of condolence, expressing high appreciation of Dr. Pileher's work, in the educational line especially, were sent to Mrs. Pileher by the United States Minister, Colonel Charles Denby, Sir Robert Hart, Inspector General of the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs, and others.

While the funeral procession was in progress, the flags upon all the foreign legations were displayed at half-mast in honor of his memory.

Leander William Pileher was born at Jackson, Mich., August 2, 1848, and had, therefore, entered but a little way into his forty-sixth year when he finished his labors at Peking, China, November 24, 1893.

He was the son of Rev. Elijah H. Pileher, who was at the time of his birth the pastor of the Methodist Episcopal church in Jackson. His father was a man of scholarly tastes and attainments, of immense energy, industry, and administrative ability, who played an important part in

shaping the early religious and educational development of the State of Michigan. His mother, Phebe Maria, daughter of James Fisk, Esq., of Coldwater, Mich., was a typical minister's wife; intelligent, gentle, firm, prudent, persistent, industrious, economical, farsighted, capable, deeply religious, and devoted to the interests of her husband, her family, and the church. She actively supplemented the labors of her husband for a period of twenty-three years, and finally entered into her heavenly rest when but forty-six years of age. Of the four children which she bore, Leander was the third. Throughout his boyhood, which always seemed a happy one, he ever displayed in a peculiar degree the characteristics of his mother, and like her also, his maturer years were spent in active, positive labors for the good of men and the glory of God; and like her, too, his body, exhausted by the demands which an active, burning soul put upon it, gave up its spirit before the fiftieth year of life had been reached.

Leander inherited also his father's thirst for knowledge and love for teaching. He had the advantages of the training in the high school of Ann Arbor and was admitted as a freshman in the University of Michigan in the fall of 1863, when in his sixteenth year. The following year, however, his father having now removed to Romeo, Mich., it was thought best that the boy should con-

time his studies at the Ohio Wesleyan University, at Delaware, O., where he was graduated in the class of 1867, at the age of nineteen, the youngest member of the class. It was here that the influences gathered about him that determined his life work. Of this period his classmate and later colleague in missionary work, Rev. Dr. Lowry, writes :

“I well remember his first entrance into the college. The students were all seated in chapel waiting for the president to conduct the services. Presently he entered the room, followed by a venerable looking gentleman, accompanied by a slender youth, who seemed intensely interested in the scene before him. The father and son were introduced to the professors, and the boy was given a seat on the platform during prayers. After chapel services he was introduced to members of our class, and by his amiability, abundant good nature, fondness for sport, as well as evident literary abilities, at once won a prominent place in the class. His previous careful training made him excel especially in Greek and mathematics.”

For two years after graduation he labored in the public schools in Michigan ; the first year as principal of the high school in Pontiac, the second as superintendent of the public schools in the same city.

He was converted while in college, and near the close of his senior year became convinced that his future work

was to preach the Gospel. In 1869 he entered the Union Theological Seminary, in New York, for the purpose of theological study. But after one year here he yielded to an urgent call of the Church for missionary recruits for China. To this field, one of his classmates, H. H. Lowry, had already gone, and a second one, G. R. Davis, was appointed to go at the same time with himself.

He reached Peking, October 20, 1870, and entered with enthusiasm and success upon the study of the language, which he acquired with unusual facility and accuracy.

Of this period Dr. Lowry writes :

“ He was eager to enter into work, and, when he had been here only three months, went with me into the country. Although his vocabulary was necessarily limited he engaged heartily in selling books, and I remember his determination and persistency that every shop in the villages through which we passed should at least know something of the books we carried, and have the opportunity to secure them.”

Two months later, with the Agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, he made another trip of a month's duration through the western portion of this province to Huai-lou. Concerning this trip he made the following entry in the mission history : “ We traveled about 1,500 li, visited the cities of Paoting Fu, Ching-ting Fu, Yi

chow, Ting-chow, and Cho-chou and fifteen *hsien* cities, besides many market towns and villages, in every one of which we left copies of the word of God with all who showed an appreciation of it." The same year, in connection with other members of the mission, he visited Ho-chien Fu and made one long journey into Mongolia.

Of one of these journeys the following description was written by Mr. Pilcher himself at the time, under the caption of

ITINERATING IN NORTH CHINA.

At the very best it is hard work—yet the missionary derives from it much of enjoyment. He generally goes in a cart. He must travel over Chinese roads also, and that is equivalent to saying the roughest roads of their kind in the world. And he must stop at inns, which invariably lack only the elements of cleanliness and general comfort to be called good. The preacher, nevertheless, has a very satisfactory feeling in the assurance that he is doing his Master's business. This, tinged a little with the romance of the method of travel and the surrounding circumstances, renders his discomforts quite endurable. He carries his bed with him. It serves to pack the cart in the daytime, and to sleep on at night. Besides this, his chief baggage is a box of books, and, perhaps, a small box of provisions, if he has no taste for the Chinese food and cooking. When once upon the road he can shut himself up in the narrow limits of the coop, into which he has stowed his things, or sit out in front with the carter, and indulge in the delectable pastime

of dangling his feet in the air. Thus he moves slowly along all day, either in the cold wind, freighted with clouds of dust, or, if it be summer, in the burning sun. If he makes no stops he can travel forty miles a day. The circumstances must be very extraordinary if he travel farther. The general average is from twelve to fifteen miles a day, with frequent delays to distribute books and to preach at the towns and villages along the route. He is by no means sure of comfortable accommodations when night comes.

One night will always live in my memory. Two of us had traveled to a range of hills lying west of Peking, and called the "Western Hills." At noon of the sixth day we reached a place of considerable size called E-cho, where, but a year ago, resistance on the part of the people obliged the American Board to give up a chapel established there. The reception given us was cool though polite. We labored in the place until nearly evening, and then, learning the fears of the innkeeper that we would not be allowed to remain over night, we pushed on to a place situated in the Hills, distant about seven miles. A ride over a road poorly constructed, over rough rocks and through a long and narrow pass, brought us to the village, but not until after dark. We had no choice of a resting place, but the deepening darkness and the chilling atmosphere warned us to find shelter somewhere. An inn was found—but such an inn! It was, however, a *dernier ressort*, and we accepted of it. Half of it was in ruins, and the desolate and deserted appearance of the fallen walls and decaying roof made them assume in the evening shadows strange and weird shapes. Beneath a bundle of rags we discovered our host. As he stood in the dilapidated

doorway—shivering the meantime in the night air—we read in him the tale of an opium smoker. His body was as nearly a ruin as was his house. His unkempt hair, unshaven head, sunken cheeks, the abstract and gone appearance of the eyes, and the long-drawn breath, caused him to appear to our imaginations more like a specter. Although a room had been appointed for us at one side and through the midst of the ruins, we yielded to the request of the carters—notoriously a reckless class of men—and ensconced ourselves in a room adjoining the one occupied by others on the place. The room showed the bare rafters overhead, which, as well as the sides, were covered with dirt, and the floor was dirt itself. A stove improvised and a small fire of charcoal, which sent its smoke and gas into the room already too close, served to prepare a few eggs and some meat, which constituted the evening meal. A candle made the darkness the more perceptible, yet it sufficed for my friend to read to a small but curious crowd of Chinese in the room a few words from the Gospel, and then we sung—accompanied by the concertina—“Jesus, Lover of my soul.” Many times have I been stirred by the music of this beautiful hymn, but never before did it have so deep a meaning, nor awake the soul to its dependence upon its Saviour so thoroughly. A few words of exhortation and a prayer followed. Our visitors retired, and shortly everything in the adjoining room was quiet, save the heavy breathing of the opium smoker, who alone remained awake, and, lying with his head pillowed on a stone at the further corner of the room, was inhaling the poison of this fearful drug. During the evening his eyes had been peering at us over the shoulders of others, and he seemed the

“evil genius,” the recollection of whom would not leave our minds. Without putting out our light we threw ourselves down upon the raised platform of mud—used in the north of China as beds—and indulged our tired natures in a most unsatisfactory attempt at sleep. Several times I started suddenly from my nap at the sound of heavy breathing near my feet. My eyes met those of my “evil genius.” I do not know why he came in; he said nothing, but turned and kindly snuffed the candle with his fingers, then went out. Thankful when the morning came, we were glad of an excuse to leave the carters in charge of our things, and to go out upon the streets. After leaving the Gospel with the people, it was a relief to get away by midday. I left my “evil genius” of that night sitting upon the place where I had made my bed. He was trying to warm his long bony fingers over a few dying embers of charcoal remnants of our fire.

Unlike this, yet of an equally unpleasant nature, is the open opposition with which the missionaries are sometimes met in their itineraries. In the evening of February 20 we reached an inn at a town one hundred miles in the interior. The morning found us on the streets engaged in our usual work. A Chinese helper accompanied us, but was soon brought to task by a few official underlings, and was obliged to stop his work. They thought by intimidating him to frighten us. Seeing, however, that this had no effect on us, and that the common people seemed to enjoy our presence, one, more bold than the others, ordered us to leave the town. But conscious that we were doing right, as also that both treaty stipulations and the possession of passports gave us

the legal right to do as we were doing, we, naturally obstinate, demanded his authority. But both his name and his official rank were refused us. We in turn refused to go except he should bring us the magistrate's order with the proper official seal affixed. Our challenger made a show of action and left us. We were troubled no more, but remained until, in accordance with previously arranged plans, the time came for us to proceed on our journey.

In 1874 he returned to the United States. Being temporarily employed in the Mission Rooms in New York he availed himself of the opportunity to continue his systematic theological studies, which had been broken off on his appointment to China, first in Union Theological Seminary, and later at the College of Theology of Boston University, from which he was graduated in March, 1876. He immediately thereafter returned to his chosen field of work in North China, taking back with him also a wife, Mary, the daughter of Mrs. Martha Garwood, of Monroe, Mich., to whom he was united in marriage March 8, 1876, his own father being the officiating clergyman.

After his return to China he resumed with increased energy and zest his missionary labors, preaching, traveling into the country, and engaging in general evangelistic work. He always manifested a deep interest in the instruction of children, and he was peculiarly successful in conducting Sunday schools. He took great pains in

securing illustrations and helps that would attract the attention and impress the lesson upon the children. He preserved probably the only complete file in existence of the Sunday School Lesson Leaves, published by the Peking Committee. For several years he was the superintendent of the Sunday school in the mission at Peking, which outgrew the capacity of the chapel, until a second session had to be held especially for the outside children, and this second school will now have to be again divided; thus every Sabbath brought from six to seven hundred children under Christian instruction.

For six years Dr. Pilcher was stationed at Tientsin. While there, in addition to his regular duties, he filled the position of vice consul about a year. The satisfactory manner in which he discharged the duties of the office was highly commended by the minister in a dispatch to the Secretary of State, in which he wrote: "The legation regrets exceedingly Mr. Pilcher's resignation. During his incumbency at Tientsin, by his energy, tact, and good judgment, he has rendered valuable service to our interests and to the government, and his departure from the port is universally regretted. And it is with great pleasure that I call the especial attention of the department to the ability and faithfulness with which he has discharged the duties of his official position."

In 1884 Mr. Pilcher for the second time visited the United States, principally on account of his wife's health. Leaving his family in the United States he returned to China in the autumn of the following year. At the Annual Meeting of that year he was appointed Presiding Elder of the Peking District, and also Principal of Wiley Institute, which a few years later was reorganized as the Peking University, to which the remaining years of his life were devoted, having been elected president at the first meeting of the Board of Managers. Although for a time he was compelled to devote considerable attention to other duties, henceforth the energies of his life were given to building up the institution with which his name and work will ever be associated. All his previous training and missionary experience gave him peculiar fitness for the difficult task of laying the foundations and planning for the increasing efficiency of the university, where he hoped many of the youth of China would be prepared under the best Christian influence for future usefulness in both Church and State. In his work of teaching he felt the need of suitable textbooks in several branches of study. He not only set to work himself to supply the necessary books, but to interest others in the work, and many replies to the circular sent out by him for this purpose arrived when he was too ill to attend to them. Thus his influence was not confined to

the institution with which he was immediately connected, but was being extended to the work of higher education throughout the empire.

One illustration of his character, which also was one element of his success, was his painstaking attention to the minutest details. He had a genius for systematic and orderly arrangement. Many evidences of this are seen in all the buildings and grounds of the university, in the rooms of the students, the arrangement of the catalogue, the preparation of the program for the public entertainments, and the neatness and taste displayed in his publications. But while he gave special thought in this direction his plans were not narrow. He looked forward to the future growth of the university in endowment, buildings, increase of students, and spiritual results until it should be worthy of the name given it at its foundation; but he was called away when apparently he was just prepared for his grandest work. After all, his grandest work was the manliness of his Christian character. It was this that won for him the hearts of his students and impressed upon them the importance of consecration to the noblest purposes of life, and that made one of them declare that "Dr. Pilcher regarded us not as Chinese children, but as his own children." It was this that won the esteem and love of all who knew him intimately.

The Ohio Wesleyan University at its Commencement of 1889 conferred upon Mr. Pilcher the degree of Doctor of Divinity, an honor which his father had likewise received from the same university before him.

The following tender tribute is from the pen of his classmate and colleague, Rev. George R. Davis. Though written as a private letter to Dr. Lowry, no violence to friendship is done by inserting it here :

I would like to write concerning our dear classmate of early days, our colleague for more than a score of years in this alien land. But our three lives have been lived so much alongside, so intimately related, that there is nothing I could say or write but you are familiar with.

Now that he is gone from our midst, our Delaware trio broken, the youngest of the three taken, I realize how much our lives have been intertwined. I can hardly think of an interesting event or pleasant occasion of my life for the last twenty-eight years with which he was not somehow associated. Side by side have the lines of our lives run thus far, and I cannot yet realize that all has ceased, that no more will we hear his voice or see his familiar form. Our lives pass before my vision. I seem to see him again entering, a stranger, into our class at college; his frail, delicate looking body, his active mind, fun-loving spirit, his readiness in recitation, his mastery of all college boy larks, his jolly habit of shaking hands with every classmate, no matter how often he met them, his ready wit, his endless pranks. I seem to see him as my roommate the last terms of our college career,

or guest in my father's home. College days over, we were as intimately associated in Michigan. Through his father's instrumentality I found my way into the Detroit Conference. Again and again I visited him in his father's home, or where he was teaching. Scarcely a month passed without letters between us, until together we were appointed to join you in Peking. I shall never forget my surprise and pleasure when he wrote me from New York city that he had just offered to be one of the six young men Bishop Kingsley had asked for to go to China, nor the pleasure of my dear father over the fact that Pilcher was going with me, and we were to join you in this strange land. He assisted at the only wedding I ever witnessed in my own family. Together we came across continent and ocean. There were seven young men and one lady together in that company. Two sleep their long sleep, three have left the field, and only Plumb and I remain, and a quarter of a century has not passed.

Of our early career in China I need speak but briefly. It is all familiar to you. You will remember the wonderful facility, ease, and accuracy with which he acquired the spoken language. How those early years rise before my memory now! Again we are together during our first summer's wanderings among the mountains along the line of the Great Wall for more than a thousand li. The wild roads, the numberless and often swollen streams, the wretched inns—bad eggs and bitter oatmeal. The delight with which we wandered over the Mongol plain alive with its strange nomadic life; its herds of cattle, droves of horses, flocks of sheep and roving camels. At Kalgan we met Gilmour for the first time. And now McIlvaine, Gilmour, and Pilcher lie

sleeping in the land to which they all consecrated their superior talents—McIlvaine on the quiet hillside at Chinan Fu, Gilmour here at Tientsin, and our dear colleague west of Peking between his own firstborn and your darling children. Again I am traveling with him on many a shorter trip about Tsinhua, Ho-chien, and Paoting Fu. Ever to be remembered incidents come back without my bidding; friendly discussions arising out of the fact that one heard many sounds and the other saw many things, unheard by one and unseen by the other, for one was short of sight and the other dull of hearing.

He was at my side when I was married, and in my home he and his wife spent their first weeks together in China.

To us he was the methodical man of detail, our ready preacher in Chinese, efficient interpreter, and accurate Conference secretary. Of late years the growing preacher in Chinese was absorbed in the one work for which he seemed best adapted. That called out all his energies—quietly translating or preparing book after book for school use; working and planning for a greater future in our school work, he himself promising increasing usefulness. How well I remember his saying on his last return from the United States, “I have come back to give twenty years of hard work to China.” Eight years have passed away, and in the zenith of promise, in the midst of his years, his higher call came. He has answered to his new name in the roll call before his Master’s throne. His short life over, work done, rest entered upon. God takes the will to work for him as work accomplished and rewards in the fullness of his love. We are left behind; we cannot help our tears when we think or

try to talk of him. His memory will ever be precious to us. Schoolmate friend of early days and colleague of these long years. We will often long for a grasp of the quiet hand, of the sound of the voice forever still.

As for his work God has some plan which will become plain by and by. Rather the work was God's. To this worker he has said, "Enough, come up higher;" God will look after the future workers. Let us seek his will and do his bidding.

The following statement of personal religious experience was written out by Dr. Pilcher, under the date of February 6, 1887. It illustrates the peculiar traits of his mind, his humility and self-depreciation, his intense desire to be both a reaper and a sower. It is as follows:

It is now twenty-one years since I received the assurance that God, for Christ's sake, forgave my sins. During all these years I have been as one dwelling upon a plateau of comfortable width, well up the mountain sides. Beneath me was the "pit from which I was digged." Before me was spread out the beautiful landscape filled with many a view of delight to the spiritual sense. But behind and above me towered the mountain with its brow bathed in eternal light, and from whose crest the ever widening view stretched away in every direction clear up to the gates of pearl, through whose open portal streamed the glory that filled the soul of the dwellers upon the mountain top and shed some rays down the slope till they reached me, imparting some notion of what was above and beyond.

Year after year, and day after day, I continued to dwell there. Earnest men and women passed me in their journey toward the light that blazed overhead. They often stopped and urged me to go with them. With Bible in hand they pointed out the promises of our God which give assurance of a loftier experience and a broader vision. I often felt drawn to follow with them, but with decreasing satisfaction and diminishing pleasure continued to dwell upon my chosen terrace with its beautiful but narrow view. Each time I wished them godspeed, and each time was left behind.

By and by these passers-by irritated me. I shunned their presence as much as possible. If obliged to listen to their stories of the wonders of the glory that shone above me I did so with indifference and looked upon them as visionaries. I put aside all their messages unread. I tried to persuade myself that the towering mountain and its crown of glory was a figment of the imagination, and that where I stood was the true height of spiritual desire. In this delusion I rested.

For seventeen years God has permitted me to preach the Gospel of love and salvation. He has placed me out upon the outpost in a most responsible position. I have tried to tell men of Christ, and from my own experience could point to the "Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." Under my ministry men have from time to time seemed to yield, but seldom have they given themselves to Christ. There has always been some reason unrealized by me, because of which they have turned back when they were almost persuaded to become Christians. Once a friend asked me if there was anyone in the world whose conversion I

could trace to influences wrought through me. The question was a blunt one, and the questioner was hoping for a reply that would be an encouragement to him in his experience. My first impulse was to answer "Yes," but when my mind tried to fix upon anyone who had been led to Christ by me I could find no one. Nor was it very satisfactory to say, "God only asks of me to work and leave the results with him." So far as I know there never had been any results to leave.

Within the last fortnight, by the kind exhortations of a friend, and because of an intensified desire to help some who are about me, I have been forced to thoroughly review my whole Christian life and examine into the motives that have inspired what had seemed to be my most praiseworthy acts. Prayerfully and tearfully I undertook the task. Beginning with my conversion one thing after another came up before me. The procession was long, and the troops seemed good to look upon. But alas! with scarcely an exception a closer inspection revealed the fact that the goodness was in appearance only. Like so many of the processions seen on the streets of this city they were only beggars clothed in goodly array, not for their own good, but to swell the train and magnify the name of my own self. I suddenly—and I must say it in justice to myself, for I verily thought during all these years that I was doing God's service—awoke to the fact that I had been striving "to glorify *self*; enjoy God forever!"

Dwelling upon my little mountain terrace God's face has been hid from me, and only a few rays of his glory have fallen upon the spot where I lived. I have sung, "Arise, my

soul, arise" and have clung hard to things below. I have cried out, "Nearer, my God, to thee," and then turned my back upon him. I have with my lips said, "O for a heart to praise my God," and my heart said to praise *self*. I have exclaimed, "Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove," and have not looked up for the blessing. My private devotions have not been seasons of communion with my Father, but times of formal adherence to habits formed in childhood. My Bible has been read only in a perfunctory way, because a professing Christian is supposed to own a Bible and read it too. But alas! its clean pages * and unused condition testify too truly to my neglect. It has been consulted at not infrequent intervals, but much as one would consult an encyclopedia, and more frequently the cyclopedia has been consulted first. Its pages had never been illuminated for me, and I derived no pleasure from its perusal. The work for the salvation of immortal souls has been sort of a profession as far as I have exercised the sacred calling. Even here self and selfishness have been the inspiration and motive.

Humiliating as this confession is it is not half of what the Lord showed me, until in self-abasement I could have grovelled in the dust in agony of despair. A great weight of pain and sorrow seemed to be crushing through my very soul. Deeply did I repent and freely would I have done any penance if such would have been of avail in lifting the burden from my heart. I was overcome with amazement, and thankful beyond measure that God had so kindly spared me

*This is an especially marked instance of the humble tone of self-depreciation which characterizes this experience. Dr. Pilcher's private Bible, as left behind him, is a monument to his careful and discriminating study of the word; it fairly bristles with marginal notes and references, which would indicate unusually careful Bible study.

to see my sin in all its enormity. He heard my prayer for forgiveness, but there still lay before me the ascent of the mountain with its crown of glory and its crest of light. For a whole week I sought the path leading up. For some reason it seemed hedged up, and I could not make the start. Others about me found the path, and from their altitude of desire attained beckoned me on, pointing out the path that seemed so plain to them, but was hidden from me.

I tried with God's help to remove self entirely from sight, but at the same time I was inclined to dictate to the Lord just where I ought to discover the way, and just how I wished the blessing. So long as I continued in this spirit the way was hidden from my view. Once I was almost ready to give up thinking the blessing was for me, and that the glory of the mountain top was reserved for others. For a while I tried to rest resigned in this thought. But I found I could live no longer where I had dwelt so long. I must either climb higher or sink lower. Encouraged by the words and experience of others I determined to rest in the promises and wait, expecting the answer in God's own time and way.

Yesterday at noon in our prayer meeting the pathway began to open up. The evening before, while exhorting the Chinese who had been seeking salvation, I had used the illustration of the persistency of a beggar in seeking alms. Good old Brother Sun arose soon after, and dwelling upon the same illustration spoke of how often it was the case that the beggar became so engrossed in seeking that he fails to notice the gift that is thrown to him, and allows it to fall unheeded in the dust. I thought, while others in the noon

prayer meeting were telling their joys, "Have I not failed to heed the gift already bestowed?" Finally I opened the pathway thus indicated. Then the light began to stream in, slowly filling the broken and empty vessel. Higher by faith I climbed until soon I stood upon the summit, all bathed in light with the joy that overflowed.

It was no vision or chimera of a disordered mind. I hungered and thirsted and was *filled*. O! blessed experience. O joy unspeakable! I had asked for a great deal, but the Lord gave me more—*exceedingly* ABUNDANTLY ABOVE ALL that I asked or thought.

I now stand on the mountain top. Clouds of doubt cannot rise to this altitude. The light that is all around, streaming forth from the throne of God, is too bright and all-pervading to permit of a shadow. Here I want to dwell, not for my peace, but for God's glory.

"Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord."—Paul (Eph. v, 8).

LEANDER WILLIAM PILCHER,

"A child of the King."

The following letters, addressed to Mrs. Pilcher by Sir Robert Hart, of the Imperial Chinese Customs, and by Colonel Charles Denby, United States Minister to China, express the esteem in which Dr. Pilcher was held by residents in China not connected with missionary work, who yet were familiar with the character and labors of Dr. Pilcher:

Peking, Nov. 29, 1893.

DEAR MRS. PILCHER: I was at your church yesterday, and very sorry indeed to be there on so mournful an occasion.

The service had, however, its bright side, and the general sadness must have been much relieved as speaker after speaker bore testimony to the work of the deceased, to the love and respect they felt for him. The Chinese student's address was a very fitting tribute on the part of the college to the memory of the president, and it was most gratifying to see in it how the speaker was moved and how he felt all he said. But to yourself, dear Mrs. Pilcher, what a blow to be bereft of the head of the household!

No matter what sympathy is tendered, no matter what consolations are suggested to you, your woman's heart will be sore for many a day to come, and that is both natural and proper. We know that we Christians do not sorrow as those without hope, and we know that death, leading to the higher life, is to be met with joy rather than shrunk from with dismay; and we can, as our duty and love to our Father in heaven requires, be resigned; but such separations are hard to bear all the same, and the best thing is to let nature be nature—cry out your grief and let time bring you healing and consolation. You have still your own life to go on with and your children to look after. Your duty to them and to yourself requires you to think less of what has been “committed to the earth” than of what still remains upon it, and you must take up your burden bravely. My heart bleeds for the dear girls in America. How this news will shock them! But they are young and lovely, and, sad as life and the world will for a moment seem, the buoyancy of youth will

assert itself and sorrow will fade and take away pain. Your mission and surroundings, I am sure, show no lack of sympathy for you in your distress, but I hope you will take these few words from myself as some little evidence of outside esteem for dear Dr. Pilcher and the way in which we all feel for his bereaved family.

With much sympathy and kind regards,

Yours very truly,

ROBERT HART.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,

Peking, Nov. 25, 1893.

DEAR MRS. PILCHER: I beg to be permitted to express to you my profound sorrow on account of the death of Dr. Pilcher, and my deep sympathy with you and your children in your bereavement.

I greatly admired and esteemed him. His gentle manners, his great learning, his devotion to Christian education, were passports to the respect and affection of all persons who had the honor and the pleasure of his acquaintance. He singularly united firmness to courtesy, natural ability to acquired knowledge, firm conviction to a winning faith.

For something over eight years I have known him well. Associated somewhat with him in the organization of his life work, the Peking University, I had frequent occasions to appreciate and recognize his prudence and judgment and wisdom. That institution has lost its founder, its head, its chief champion. Others will step forward to take his place and the good work will go on.

In the hearts of his family and friends, of whom I am

proud to account myself one, there will nevertheless always be a vacancy, for time will not supply the place which was filled by this one of humanity's true noblemen. The flag of the legation, and of all the other legations, will be put at half-mast to-morrow during the funeral ceremonies, as a tribute of respect and sorrow to the pure and honored memory of your distinguished husband.

I remain, with sympathy and sorrow,

Your devoted friend,

CHARLES DENBY.

ADDRESS OF THE STUDENT, CHEN HENG TE, AT THE FUNERAL.

(TRANSLATED FROM THE CHINESE.)

We are met in this church to-day with sad hearts. Why is this? Because we are all unwilling that Dr. Pilcher should leave us. There are those who have just been speaking to you of him and his work, but they know not as we know, because they have only heard. I know more thoroughly than they. How does it happen that I know more thoroughly than these who are older? Because I was the pupil of him who is gone.

Now I want to speak about him, and yet not at length, because you, my brother students, already know.

I see that the foreign pastors are, as it were, like merchants. Some conduct one line of business and find profit in selling their merchandise beyond the mountains; others another line of business, and find gain in selling their merchandise beyond the seas. The preachers of our Methodist Church differ as do the merchants. There are those who preach in Peking, and those who preach in Tientsin, and at Tsumhua,

and in Shantung, and on all the districts trying to save men. But Dr. Pilcher regarded our school as a pearl of great price and the pupils as precious jewels, priceless; as life-boats, as guiding stars, and therefore he did not wish to leave the school and go elsewhere to preach, but he rejoiced in the school work. He wanted to nourish us and to help us to work in his place when he should be gone. Dr. Pilcher, in the management of the school, demanded that all lights should be out and the pupils in bed by ten o'clock at night, but alas! he himself sometimes did not retire till after midnight. There was a class in geometry that noticed in studying with him his fatigue and loss of sleep. In hearing his recitations he constantly reminded his pupils of the omnipotence of God. But notwithstanding that he excelled as a teacher and in the management of the school the Lord has called him from the earth, away from us. We cannot understand the acts of God. Our hearts are now sad and our tears flow, but God has already taken him to heaven and wiped away all his tears. There, there is happiness beyond all expression. Let me exhort my younger brother pupils a few words. Dr. Pilcher for our sakes toiled. We should with earnest hearts work for God as good disciples and supplement the work of Dr. Pilcher and rejoice his heart.

MEMORIAL RESOLUTIONS

ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF MANAGERS OF PEKING UNIVERSITY, DECEMBER 5, 1893.

Whereas, In his all-wise providence God has taken to himself the president of this board and of the institution whose affairs are intrusted to our care, one whose life was

consecrated to this work of Christian education and the uplifting and developing of the minds of China's sons; who, by his industry and perseverance was largely instrumental in bringing this institution to its present condition, and by his kindness and tact so endeared teachers and students to him that every heart was brought low in grief and sorrow at the affliction which has befallen us;

Be it Resolved, That this be the expression, though inadequate, of our sorrow at the loss of our president and friend, and our tribute of respect and admiration of his many excellent qualities; and,

Be it further Resolved, That these resolutions be spread upon the minutes of this board, that coming generations may obtain some idea of the regard of the first Board of Managers of Peking University for its first president, and that a copy of the same be presented to the bereaved family.

CHARLES DENBY, JR.,

Secretary of the Board of Managers.

MEMORIAL MINUTE OF THE BOARD OF MANAGERS OF THE
MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL
CHURCH.

ADOPTED AT ITS REGULAR SESSION, JANUARY 16, 1894, BISHOP
C. D. FOSS, PRESIDING:

This board has heard with deep sorrow of the death of the Rev. Leander W. Pilcher, D.D., of North China Conference, which occurred at Peking, November 24, 1893. Dr. Pilcher was appointed in 1870 from Detroit Conference, and at the time of his death had completed twenty-three years of faithful

and successful service. He was a man of superior natural ability, classical education, and thorough consecration. He early acquired such a mastery of the Chinese language as to place him in the front rank among missionaries as an accurate translator and fluent speaker. His eminent fitness for the position caused him to be chosen as the president of our Peking University, an institution which, under his wise management and leadership, has attained a high character among the Christian educational institutions of China.

His consecration and enthusiasm made him a model missionary. He fully believed that the Gospel of Christ would eventually overcome all opposing forces and completely conquer the Chinese people, and he joyfully gave his life to the accomplishment of that end. For more than a year his health had been gradually giving way under the burdens he was bearing, but when urged to return to his native land for rest and recuperation he begged to be allowed to remain at his post, upon the ground that his absence would increase the labors of his brethren, all of whom were already overburdened.

In his death the Church in China has been bereft of one of its most faithful and successful servants, and the Missionary Society of one of its ablest and most devoted representatives. We tender to the bereaved wife and children of our deceased brother our sincere sympathy, praying that the God of all grace may abundantly comfort and keep them.

We direct that this paper shall be spread upon our records, and that a copy of the same be forwarded by the secretary to Sister Pilcher.

EDITORIAL TRIBUTE FROM "THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE,"
ISSUE OF JANUARY 4, 1894.**"Through a Glass Darkly."**

The Rev. Leander W. Pilcher, D.D., President of Peking University, died in Peking, November 24, 1893. Recent letters from China had prepared us in some measure for this sad announcement. We judge from the correspondence that the immediate cause of the death was abscess of the liver, an organ which in that clime is extremely liable to be the seat of intractable disease. This intelligence is peculiarly painful to us, for the deceased had been personally known to us since he was a youth. He was the son of the late Rev. Elijah H. Pilcher, D.D., so long a powerful factor in Michigan, and later for a time in a branch of Canadian Methodism; he was a brother of Lewis S. Pilcher, M.D., for ten years Editor of the Health Department of this paper, and Secretary of the Board of Managers of the Methodist Episcopal Hospital in Brooklyn, and a member of its Executive Committee from its inception, and also a brother of James E. Pilcher, M.D., of the United States Army, who is now in charge of our Health Department. The Rev. Leander W. Pilcher was sent to North China in 1870, and has given twenty-three years of most efficient and valuable service to the work. He was of an energetic and amiable nature, an accomplished scholar, a devout and earnest Christian, and proved a model missionary.

He delivered a discourse in the Summerfield Methodist Episcopal Church, Brooklyn, on the occasion of his first visit to this country after the beginning of his missionary career, and a remark which he made to the writer at its close

has remained in our memory as a basis of genuine and undying sympathy with every missionary in a pagan land: "I had to come home to reinforce myself by Christian associations for the awful struggle of maintaining a Christian faith, to be able to live amidst the conscious and unconscious sin of the myriads who pass by me, surrounding me and pressing upon me, the uncounted millions of the Chinese."

Being asked what he meant, he explained that a strange morbid feeling of hopelessness, a mysterious undying apprehensiveness concerning his own spiritual life, seemed to creep over him and terrify him lest, instead of being able to stem the current, he should be borne down by it. From that hour we respected him far more highly than it would be possible to respect any man whose thoughts were chiefly engaged in the antiquities or politics of China and the distinction of the missionary vocation, or who seemed always as cheerful as though "on flowery beds of ease."

It tests faith in the providence of God to see a man removed, at the age of forty-five years, whose place it will be so difficult to fill. "Peking *University*" may sound like an ostentatious title, but not to those who understand the foundations which have been laid there, or the opinion of that work held by the highest Chinese authorities. A thousand years to come—unless the barbarous action of our government shall compel the expulsion of the missionaries from China—the name of Leander W. Pilcher will be given as that of the first president of an institution where as thorough work as the Chinese themselves do in their own civilization will be attempted in order to impart to them the practical wisdom of the West.

Of far more importance than this is that his name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life, a directory to which the whole universe will listen; that he died in the Lord; is no more a voluntary exile to the outskirts of the commonwealth of Israel; but has entered upon everlasting communion with the innumerable company of the angels and the spirits of just men made perfect; some of whom, having already ascended to glory from China, were ready to respond to the voice which John heard and to the Spirit, "You rest from your labors, and your works shall not only follow you, but have already preceded you; of whom are we that now welcome you!"

His bereaved family and his associates in the Mission should, and we trust do, feel that they have the earnest prayers and an outflowing of love to them from the Church in the removal of their brother and colleague from the terrestrial to the one true and only Celestial Empire.

TRIBUTE FROM THE REV. DR. W. A. P. MARTIN, PRESIDENT
OF THE IMPERIAL TUNGWEN COLLEGE, PEKING.

When Dr. Pilcher appeared in Peking, more than twenty years ago, his scholarly refinement, industry, and enterprise led me to conceive high hopes of his usefulness. Those hopes have been more than realized in all points excepting the shortness of his shining path.

From the first he aimed at the intellectual awakening of the Chinese as an auxiliary to the work of conversion. This was shown by the interest he took in promoting the sale of scientific as well as religious books.

Later on he expended much thought in devising schemes for reading rooms and lectures, in which other missions were to cooperate. But the special work for which he was sent to China seems to have been the founding of a Christian university.

Not one missionary in a thousand is called to render to the cause of Christ a service so distinguished. Well might he close his eyes in peace, feeling that his part of the work was done, and that he would commit the rest with confidence to the providence of God.

Growing with the growth of the Christian community, this admirable institution will stand as his monument for ages to come.

TRIBUTE FROM THE REV. C. O. KEPLER, "ZION'S HERALD,"
JANUARY 10, 1894.

In your last issue is the sad announcement of the death of Rev. Leander W. Pilcher, D.D., of Peking, China. It may not be generally known that Dr. Pilcher was, up to the time of his death, which occurred November 24, 1893, President of Peking University, one of the largest and most promising mission educational institutions in Methodism. It was his complete sacrifice of self in his heroic labors for the university that hastened his untimely death at the early age of forty-five. He had served over twenty years in the North China Mission, and seen it grow from small beginnings into its present grand dimensions. During his time Peking University had developed from the modest Wiley Institute to its present influential position in the heart of the Chinese empire. His was a wonderfully sunny and happy nature, so

universally kind that "none knew him but to love." All the missionaries' children were fond of him, and familiarly called him "Uncle Bob." As a "bearer of good tidings" he was simple but powerful. The writer, a year ago, had the privilege of hearing him preach in Chinese to a large audience of native Methodists in Asbury Chapel, Peking. The sermon was simple in style and diction, but was pervaded with such a spirit of kindness and gentleness and love for mankind as to touch all hearts. His power over men was no less striking. He not only ably governed the university students, but Sunday after Sunday, with the greatest ease, maintained perfect order in a Sunday school of 600 native children fresh from pagan homes.

Dr. Pilcher was a graduate of the School of Theology of Boston University in the class of 1876. As a scholar he took high rank among the sinologues. Chinese men of letters have paid him the high compliment of saying that if they heard him speaking Chinese and did not know who he was they would think him a native. For several years, in addition to his other many burdens, he has been actively engaged in translating text-books for use in the university, and only recently brought out a fine physical geography. He was also a member of the general committee for translating the Sunday school lessons. There are few men in our mission field whom the Church could so ill afford to lose. His place it will be well-nigh impossible to fill, and his loss to the North China Mission is irretrievable. Dr. Pilcher leaves a wife and infant son in China and two young daughters in school in this country. The Church at large mourns with them in their bereavement.

TRIBUTE FROM THE REV. O. W. WILLITS, "NORTHWESTERN
CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE."

The death of Leander W. Pilcher was not wholly a surprise, and yet it affects me like a shock. He was too young to lay down the work he was only just ripely ready to accomplish. I cannot help feeling that it need not to have been. The sensitiveness of the Church on the return of missionaries for restoration of health, unless they be utterly broken in constitution, reacts upon the sensitiveness of fine natures; and many remain in feebleness and with rapidly failing powers who might have been perfectly recovered had they temporarily forsaken the posts they could no longer hold with highest efficiency. Some call that heroism. Perhaps it is. But the Church cannot afford that kind of heroism. If \$10,000 would, one year hence, replace Dr. Pilcher as President of Peking University, it would be an unusually economical outlay. For twenty years he has been getting ready. His knowledge of the Chinese language, his personal influence with men of official rank and influence, his mastery of the details of educational work in China's capital, it will take several tens of thousands of dollars to reproduce, and then we may fail in the man. And Brother Pilcher was the right man. Three years ago he ought to have come home, not for years, but for a few months. Our missionaries ought to come home as freely as our bishops go abroad. It is playing with great issues to hold religiously to the romantic and no longer necessary rule of long continuous absences. The standing rule ought to be: "Go work with your might, do not spare yourself; observe the

laws of health ; but when you need to rest or require special medical treatment do not delay to seek it at any cost. The expense of travel is heavy, we know, but your value to the Church is what you can do; and the full fruitage of your missionary life we expect to appear in the later years. Your early death or practical superannuation will be the inestimable loss."

This is not a criticism of the Missionary Board. A more generous, sympathetic, and thoroughly efficient administration than that of our Missionary Society it would be hard to find. But the habit of the home Church is to count years. Less than so many is an unwarranted term; if return be necessitated, then it was a missionary failure. They did not estimate so when the wounded were paroled during the war. Was he in the midst of the battle? Did he fight like a soldier? Was his wound honorably received? Welcome home! Gather about you cheer! Hurry and get well; the field awaits you; the war is not over; the government will look after the expenses; money is not to be weighed against a true soldier. And such an atmosphere would hasten the flow of the life tides.

Leander W. Pilcher was tireless, painstaking, accurate, and persistent in whatever he undertook. His affections were strong and tenacious. He was simple and unaffected in his manner; seldom angry, and then self-controlled, so that only the rigidness of his features and the calmness of his tones betrayed the fires which were being smothered by his will. He was a perfect child in his readiness to confess a fault; but he would not confess one which he did not recognize as a fault. So, even with such frankness and humility, it was possible for an occasional difference to arise which time even could not heal. But should the other make

the slightest advance toward an understanding, the whole affectionate nature of Brother Pilcher sprang into a loving reconciliation. I have slept too often with Brother Pilcher, in the vicissitudes of missionary life, not to know his heart, appreciate its wealth of principle, fidelity of friendship, devotion to Christ, and consecration to the highest nobility of Christian manhood. "I am distressed for thee, my brother."

TESTIMONIAL FROM THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AS TO
EFFICIENCY AS VICE CONSUL AT TIENTSIN, CHINA.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,

Peking, June 11, 1884.

HON. F. T. FRELINGHUYSEN, Secretary of State.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith copies of certain correspondence having reference to the consulate at Tientsin. From it you will gather that Mr. L. W. Pilcher, Vice Consul in charge, has resigned his position, and that, pending the appointment of a consul, or other arrangements, I have requested her Britannic majesty's minister to allow the British consul at Tientsin to assume temporary charge of our interests there.

The legation regrets exceedingly Mr. Pilcher's resignation. During his incumbency at Tientsin, by his energy, tact, and good judgment, he has rendered valuable service to our interests and to the government, and his departure from the port is universally regretted.

And it is with great pleasure that I call the especial attention of the department to the ability and faithfulness with which he has discharged the duties of his official position.

JNO. RUSSELL YOUNG.

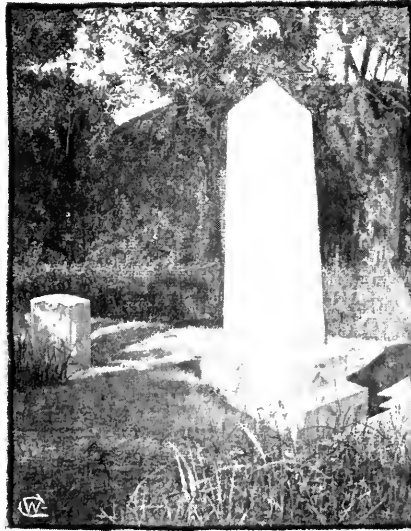
DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, August 7, 1884.

JOHN RUSSELL YOUNG, Esq., etc., etc., PEKING.

SIR: I have received your dispatch, No. 458, of June 11, last, relative to the resignation of Mr. L. W. Pilcher as United States Vice Consul at Tientsin, and cheerfully unite with you in testifying the department's appreciation of his official services and its regret at losing so valuable an officer.

You will so apprise Mr. Pilcher. I am, sir,
Your obedient servant,

JOHN DAVIS, *Acting Secretary.*

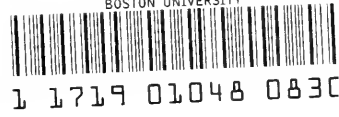


Leander W. Pilcher's Monument in the Foreign Cemetery at Peking.

Date Due

Demco 293-5

BOSTON UNIVERSITY



1 1719 01048 0830

PILCHER, Leander William

Pilcher

PILCHER, Leander

Pilcher

